

Town of Rowe – FY2013
Board of Selectmen – Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 2, 2012 – 6:00pm

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Abbott at 6:04pm.

Present: Chairman Noel Abbott, Vice Chairman Paul McLatchy III, and Selectman Marilyn Wilson

Audience: Robin Reed, Ann Foshay, Betty Vernes, Dot Page, Cindy Laffond, Bill Knittle, Jenn Morse, Ron Gordon, John Magnago

Road Closure: Donna Flagg of the Rowe School PTP requested that the Board of Selectmen close Pond Road to one-way east bound traffic on Saturday, Oct 27th from 3:30pm to 7:30pm for tailgate trick-or-treating that is being held at the Browning Bench Tool Factory. The road closure would be from the intersection of Pond and Middletown Hills Road and the entrance to Pelham Lake Park. The Select Board voted unanimously (3/0/0) to grant this request.

PTP Sign Stored at Rowe School: Ms. Flagg also asked if the Holly Berry Craft Fair sign stored in the storage shed at the school could be retrieved so they could use the sign at the fair that is going to be held at Mohawk this year. The Select Board stated they would act on the request to have Ed May retrieve the sign for them, provided that she obtains permission from Supt. Michael Buonoconti to bring the sign onto Mohawk School property. Ms. Flagg is to inform the Select Board of Mr. Buonoconti's response. They will address the matter at that time.

Memorial Plaques/Items at Rowe School: Ms. Flagg also asked if memorial plaques that are accessible could be removed from the school property and stored. Ms. Miller will contact Ed May and have him attend the next meeting to discuss the matter. Perhaps they can be stored at the fire station.

Laptops/MacBooks at School: Ms. Miller was asked to speak with Ed May about removal of the (18) laptops and (18) MacBooks and their charging cabinets from the school, cleaning them, and storing them at the town hall. This will be discussed next week

Inventory of Items Lost in Fire: Bill Knittle stated that he will have the inventory done in 3-4 weeks. He will send it to Ellen Miller when it's done.

Salvageable Items: There are several items at the school site that will be reusable, including the 80kW diesel generator and the new boiler. MIIA has indicated that the town may reuse any items that may be useful to the town.

Moving Forward: The Select Board set a deadline of noon on Wed, Oct 17th for letters of interest from persons interested in being considered for the School Building Committee. Members will be chosen at the October 23rd meeting. They discussed the possibility of also appointing a Building Committee that would look at other options for the site/use of insurance funds. This will be discussed in length at subsequent meetings.

PA System: Ms. Miller asked the Board if they would like to purchase a wireless PA system, rather than the system recommended earlier that is not wireless. They asked that the non-wireless system be purchased.

Responsibility for Insurance Funds: Opinions were received from both Town Counsel Joel Bard and School Committee Russell Dupere that the insurance funds fall under the purview of the Board of Selectmen (see attached).

Authority for School Site: The town is awaiting an opinion from Town Counsel Joel Bard as to what town board has authority for the school site. He will also be asked if there are any restrictions on the site. Ms. Miller had previously provided to Attorney Bard a listing of town meeting votes taken in the sixties when the land was taken, and actual copies of the official results of those town meetings. It also needs to be determined who has the authority to demolish the school structure.

MIIA Report: MIIA has stated the final report will be issued this week.

Administrative Assistance: Chairman Abbott is recommending that assistance be sought to work on the school fire matter. He presented a draft document for board members to review. Matter deferred to the next meeting.

Central Office Costs Associated with School Fire: Chairman Abbott had sent an email to Supt. Buonoconti on August 20th asking that the Central Office provide us with bi-weekly or monthly invoices for any additional Central Office billing time related to the Rowe School Fire. No response has been received. The email was put into a formal letter to Supt. Buonoconti and was signed by all three Selectmen. It will be sent out tomorrow.

Forum: The date of Nov 17th was chosen for the forum. Ms. Miller will see if that date is agreeable to all of the School Committee members. It was agreed to have Ms. Miller see if Mohawk Park is available for the event.

Fire Chief's Report: The chief is working on the report. He is gathering input from the other officers.

U.S. Postal Service Request: Ellen Miller reported that she had received a call from the US Postal Service stating that sometime in the near future the hours of the Rowe Post Office will likely be reduced (will probably open mornings only), and asked if the doors to the town hall could be left unlocked so that persons with post office boxes could have access to their PO boxes. Ms. Miller informed them that the side door would need to be left unlocked as that is the only handicapped accessible entrance, and that would not be possible, as that is the main door to the town hall and that would give access to all other areas of the town hall. She was then asked if the post office could advertise that the PO boxes would be accessible the hours that the town hall is open, but Ms. Miller informed them that the town would not want to be expected to be open at times it would normally be closed to accommodate the post office box patrons. Ms. Miller suggested to them that they have an outdoor PO box array installed outdoors—perhaps behind the town hall. They were not interested in that as there would be an expense involved in installing the boxes. No action is needed on this matter.

AGEO Scam: Selectman Wilson alerted the board that she has delved into the firm named AGEO which claims to be a geothermal company and has found that it is a scam. The individuals involved apparently work out of their cars, although they list their address as 10 Post Office Square in Boston—a prestigious location.

Town-Wide Phone Alert System: Board of Health (BOH) member Jenn Morse asked if the BOH could have access to the town-wide calling system to do their own notifications for items such as West Nile Virus alerts. The Select Board stated that an individual identified by the Board of Health can be given access to the system, but that they will only use the system if Ellen Miller is not available. They are to provide Ms. Miller with the name of the person that will use the system on behalf of the BOH.

Open Meeting Law Training: Town Clerk Jenn Morse informed that she recently attended a training session on Open Meeting Law given by Brian Riley of Kopelman and Paige. At her request he agreed to come to Rowe to provide this training. There is no charge for the training. The Board agreed that it would be helpful to have a training session and asked Ms. Morse to arrange a date and time for the training and to copy the Select Board and Ellen Miller on all communications. If more than 15 people sign up for the training they stated it should be held at the museum. Ms. Morse is going to invite area towns to participate, and will make arrangements with the museum if that space will be needed.

BJ's Membership: John Magnago asked what status was of the letter presented to the Select Board by Carlos Heiligmann on Sept 25th. The Board responded that the matter had been resolved.

Treasury Assistance: Selectman Wilson reported that Lynn Hathaway of Charlemont has accepted the offer to assist us with getting the Treasury office current. She is starting work tomorrow. She is being hired as a contractor at the rate of \$25.00 per hour. A letter of agreement between Ms. Hathaway and the town will be drawn up by Ellen Miller.

Appointment of Treasurer: The Select Board received an application from Donna Flagg for the position of Treasurer. She was the only applicant. They voted unanimously (3/0/0) to appoint Donna Flagg as Town Treasurer. Her appointment will expire at the next Annual Town Election in May.

Assistant Treasurer: Now that the position of Treasurer has been filled, Sandra Daviau is no longer needed as Temporary Treasurer. Ms. Miller suggested that she be appointed Assistant Treasurer to provide backup for Ms. Flagg, as Ms. Daviau is a signatory on the town bank accounts. The Selectboard voted unanimously (3/0/0) to appoint Sandy Daviau as Assistant Treasurer.

Police Chief Succession: Chairman Abbott recommended that Select Board to bring in external support/consultation to assist with the Police Chief's succession. Both Mr. McLatchy and Ms. Wilson agreed, but Ms. Wilson suggested that the board explore obtaining free assistance first. The matter will be discussed at the next meeting.

Submittal of Biweekly Accounts Payable: Ms. Miller was asked to send a memo to all boards/commissions/departments heads asking that they turn all bills payable in to the town accountant by Monday afternoon of each warrant week.

MV Excise Refund: The Select Board voted unanimously (3/0/0) to approve Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Refunds in the amount of \$70.41.

FEMA Contracts: The last (6) remaining Tropical Storm Irene contracts were signed and will be returned to MEMA.

Thank you letters: Ms. Miller was asked to draft thank you letters to both the Rowe Historical Society and the Rowe Camp & Conference Center for their allowing the use of their facilities for town business. The letters will be ready for signing at next week's meeting.

Challenge of Recall Petition: A letter was submitted by seven (7) residents (attached) challenging the petition filed for the recall of Rowe School Committee Chair Lisa Miller. The challenge is based on the following concerns:

- As one signature (which was the signature of the husband of the Town Clerk) was admitted to be false, we question the authenticity of all signatures and feel each must be officially validated;
- Many signed the petition as it was passed around during a recent school committee meeting, possibly not aware of what it was they were signing. Some attendees have declared they thought the sheet was simply a meeting attendance roster;
- The petition was not clear (did not state clearly) as to what the issue was that people were being asked to support.

The Select Board stated that they do not feel this is a matter for their board. No action was taken.

Minutes: Minutes of the August 5th and 6th meeting were submitted by Vice Chairman McLatchy for review. They were deferred to the next meeting.

Adjournment: The Selectboard voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:04pm.

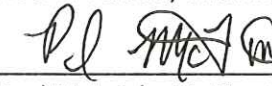
Respectfully submitted,

Ellen B. Miller
Town Coordinator

Approved:



Noel R. Abbott, Chairman



Paul McLatchy III, Vice Chairman



Marilyn Wilson

Oct 23, 2012

Date Approved

Attachments:

- Agenda
- Memo re submittal of accounts payable on Mondays
- R Dupere and J Bard opinions re authority for insurance funds
- Letter to Supt Buonoconti re Central Office charges
- MV Excise Tax Refunds
- FEMA Contracts (6)
- Challenge of Recall Petition
- BSprague letter re petition signature